

GAMES

Playing games keeps participants on their feet and keeps up their heart rate, adding a cardiorespiratory component to classes. Teamwork will make the classes more social, providing connections among participants and additional inspiration—no one wants to let the team down.

Benefits »

- ⦿ Engages participants in a fun, social activity.
- ⦿ Adds motivation and effort through competitive aspects.
- ⦿ Builds teamwork.

How to Do It »

Make sure you are prepared with a plan for which you've done a trial run with staff or friends. Whatever the game is, make sure the props are ready to go. Know the rules, and try to troubleshoot what could go wrong. Consider the various ability levels and what each person can do safely in a class setting. It's easy to have a good idea of how a game works, but it helps to do a dry run. Kinks happen, and the more you work them out ahead of time, the better the games will flow. For cardiorespiratory effects, pick games that take time and keep people involved. If you're using teams, for example, smaller teams will be more aerobic because there will be shorter rests between turns.

Four Corners

Participants walk to the four corners of a room depending on how they answer questions. You should see waves of movement with each answer. In addition to moving around, participants will get to know new things about each other. Participants go to a specific corner depending on how they respond to questions about these kinds of topics:

- ⦿ Participants who had only male children, female children, no children, or five or more children.
- ⦿ Participants who were housewives, teachers, leaders, or in the medical field
- ⦿ Participants who like green, red, blue, or yellow
- ⦿ Participants who played tennis, played golf, swam, were spectators, ballroom danced, square danced
- ⦿ Participants who had a family member who fought in a war, went to the Olympics, homesteaded
- ⦿ Favorite seasons
- ⦿ Favorite food groups

Relays

Relays are another team activity that can add a cardiorespiratory component to your normal exercise class. For greater aerobic conditioning, make the relay routes longer and teams smaller. You can also do relays back to back to keep participants going. Rear-range teams and start again.

Try to keep the teams as evenly skilled as possible. If one team wins all the time, move some members out or give them a tougher route or task the next time.

Get Up and Go Relay

The format of this relay race is similar to the Rikli and Jones Get Up and Go test (Rikli and Jones, 2001), but this version is a lot more fun! Most participants move much faster in a game than they will for a test.

- ⦿ Form relay teams of four people per team. Each team member sits on a chair.
- ⦿ Place an agility cone (or a piece of furniture) about 8 to 12 feet (2.5 to 4 meters) in front of each team.
- ⦿ To win each team must send all four players, one at a time, down and around the agility cone and back. Each player must wait for the player in front of them to sit down before he or she rises to go. The team that can do this the fastest wins.
- ⦿ The winning teams can challenge another team and so on. You can handicap the winning team with a balance beam, tandem line, or make them all use walkers.

Traditional Games

Traditional games are a great way to add a cardiorespiratory component to your class or for participants to do on their own. The main idea is to get out and have a little fun while putting balance and mobility training to the test. Try miniature golf, bocce ball, shuffleboard, and table tennis. As with the relays, try to keep the teams as evenly skilled as possible. If one team wins all the time, move some members out or give them more challenges the next time. Have fun with it!

Other Games

You can use games from other chapters, such as Pass the Duck and Bop the Hedgehogs, and you will also find yourself making up new games. Once you get going, you'll have many ideas to contribute to participants' fun and continued success.